

**The 181st Committee Meeting of the British Biophysical Society, held from
9.00 am – 1.00 pm on Tuesday 10th November 2020 online via Zoom**

Edited Minutes

Date: 10th November 2020

Present: Olwyn Byron (Chair), Tharin Blumenschein (Secretary), Ann Dixon (Treasurer), Guy Grant (Meetings Secretary), Ehmke Pohl, Peter Crowley, Syma Khalid (for part of the meeting), Robin Leatherbarrow, Jayne Wallace, Tony Watts, Alice Pyne, Mark Wallace, John Seddon.

1 Apologies: John Sanderson, Mark Leake, Dave Scott, Svetlana Antonyuk.

2 Approval of Minutes of the 179th and 180th meetings

Both sets of Minutes were approved.

3 Actions and Matters Arising

Actions are now kept in a live document online.

From previous actions – Mark Wallace is in contact with Steven Lee about cross representation in the RSC Biophysical Chemistry Group, and he will be invited to a future committee meeting. There will also be a committee meeting of the RSC Biophysical Group in November, to which Mark Wallace will be invited.

4 Chair's Report (Olwyn Byron)

Biennial meeting 2020

The Chair started her report by re-iterating my thanks and congratulations to Dave Scott and Claire Friel and all the others involved in making the 2020 Biennial meeting such a success. A reminder of numbers: Final numbers: 1458 registered! 775 max per day; 530 peak online. And such nice comments from participants (see the [Guest Book](#), signed by 261 people, for instance).

The committee approved a vote of thanks to Dave and Claire.

Follow-up actions were allocated as following:

- Survey - design and send out.

Action: Alice to set up the technical side of the survey, with questions by Olwyn and Tony with everyone's contributions

- Awards and prizes

Action: Olwyn to print and send the awards certificates, for the 3 BBS Awards winners, and one for the poster prize winner.

Action: Ann to send cheques to award winners

- Do something with guest book
Suggestion: we should select a few comments and ask permission from their authors to quote them on the website or other documents.

Feedback was received (not verbatim):

- Is there is a way of allowing remote participants without detracting from the on-site event (or the finances)?
- Having the option for remote attendance could sustain the higher-than-normal numbers at the AGM, especially for people who can't make the main meeting but would be happy to dial in for 30 minutes.
- The election of officers at the AGM was always for the Secretary, Treasurer and Meetings Secretary, with the Chair being elected at the next Committee meeting. The rules may have changed recently, and it would make sense to do them all at the AGM, but if not you may want to formalise things at the next committee.

Olwyn replied (also not verbatim):

- We are already absolutely committed to ensuring that the next Biennial is hybrid in nature (assuming face-to-face is possible 2 years hence). We are lucky because we will be able to observe how other meetings achieve this, and to learn from any mistakes.
- We will discuss AGM and elections at the next committee meeting to make sure we have an agreed process for next time.

Action: Tharin to include a review of the rules in a future agenda, covering online participation and possibly a vice-chair

In the context of the feedback above, the committee discussed that there are multiple meetings in 2021 that we can observe to see how this issue is dealt with. The EBSA meeting in Vienna will be in a hybrid format, while the Biophysical Society Annual meeting will be online. Faraday Discussions will remain online at least until summer 2021, and will move to a hybrid format after. A common topic in these groups is how set the levels of fees for in person vs online attendance.

Guy brought up the fact that people don't treat free events with the same respect, to general agreement. We still have an issue with taking online payments, and that also makes it difficult for overseas scientists to join the BBS. Tony reminded us that there is a PayPal account that can be used for this.

Action: Ann and Mark Wallace to set up the payment system

Other things

- We should include a gift of “A Place in History - The Biography of John C. Kendrew” by Paul M. Wassarman as part of the BBS Kendrew Doctoral Thesis Prize

The committee also agreed that we will have a prize for public engagement, suggestions for naming it should be sent to Olwyn.

Action: All to make suggestions

5 **Treasurer’s Report** (Ann Dixon)

1. **Balances:** The balance in the accounts is healthy.
2. **HMRC:** All reporting to HMRC up to date – audit deadline extended due to Covid-19 and submitted within extension period.
3. **Royal Society:** Application for Royal Society contributions was approved for 2021 (£939 awarded for early 2021) and new application for 2022 award has been completed and submitted.
4. **Payments:** Only recent spend was £750 for virtual conference for admin support during the meeting, and ~£480 for Karen Hanlan to audit accounts and prepare report for HMRC.

Pending payments are being processed.

We received sponsorship from Refeyn, which entirely covered the costs of our online meeting, and £250 from IUPAB for the Young Investigator Award.

6 **EBSA/IUPAB Activities** (John Seddon/Tony Watts)

EBSA – The deadline for award nominations is approaching, on 31st December. Prizes will be awarded at the next EBSA Congress, 24th-28th July 2021, in Vienna. The EBSA Congress in 2023 will take place in Stockholm. The next EBSA committee meeting will take place in January, via Zoom.

IUPAB – IUPAB is unable to publish Claire’s report on our Biennial meeting in full; the suggestion is a 12-15 line summary for their newsletter, with a link to our website where the full article can be hosted.

Action: Claire to produce the summary

Tony has been coopted into one of the IUPAB committees, and EBSA has joined IUPAB as a voting member. IUPAB has been providing sponsorship for meetings – we were able to award one of the first Young Investigator Awards at our Biennial Meeting, and lectures can be sponsored as well. The IUPAB has also been running workshops, often in remote locations.

IUPAB Assembly will take place electronically in the first half of 2021. It'd be good to have some representation on the IUPAB, as the UK hasn't been represented since 2011, when Gordon Roberts (Leicester) stepped down.

The 2020 IUPAB Congress was moved to 2021, in Brazil. The following Congress will take place in 2024, in Kyoto. Bids for the 2027 Congress need to be submitted by 1st May 2021.

7 IOP Activities (Mark Leake)

Mark Leake wasn't able to attend this meeting, but he shared the minutes of the IoP BPG meeting in July.

Mark Wallace attended the IoP BPG meeting in September, and reported continuous discussion for a large meeting, jointly organised by the IoP, PoLNET, and for which support from the BBS is being sought. This meeting would take place in 2 years.

8 Physics of Life Network (Olwyn Byron/Mark Leake)

PoLNET3 launch

The PoLNET3 virtual launch event took place on Zoom on 14 October. Several BBS Committee members participated: Olwyn joined a discussion panel in the morning session and co-chaired the afternoon session; Mark L. gave a talk in the afternoon session and participated in the subsequent panel discussion; Tharin was in attendance and at the Gin lounge at the end (with Olwyn!). The quality of the talks was superb. The virtual meet'n'greet was set up in an application called Wonder which worked really well. We should be able to use this, or something similar, for a future BBS meeting.

Institute of Physics (IOP) awards the Rosalind Franklin Medal and Prize

The Institute of Physics (IOP) awards the Rosalind Franklin Medal and Prize for distinguished contributions to physics applied to the life sciences including biological physics. The 2020 Prize has been awarded for contributions made to catalysing the substantive growth of the Physics of Life community in the UK by stimulating new, adventurous partnerships between multiple researchers in UK biological physics, as part of the second network, PoLNET2 (funded by BBSRC and EPSRC). The award was made to the 17-strong Physics of Life UK Network (PoLNET) steering group, led by Professor Tom McLeish (University of York). The BBS sent our congratulations on Twitter.

Building Collaboration at the Physics of Life Interface: Strategic Priority Fund Programme

Olwyn is a member of the 4-person Programme Mid-Term Evaluation Board which aims to

- assess the additionality of the programme and the main positive factors and challenges experienced so far.

- consider the impact of this programme on Multi- and Inter-Disciplinary Research and Innovation (MIDRI) research in this field and find out whether researchers are collaborating more or differently because of this programme.

This evaluation process will run from mid-December 2020 until end February 2021 and will produce an Evaluation Report for UKRI.

Physics of Brains Workshop

The first PoLNET3 workshop (Physics of Brains) will take place on Zoom on 18th and 19th November 2020 (13.00 - 17.00).

Other events

The next PoLNET steering group meeting is on 11 November.

PoLNET is also sponsoring a series of online lectures. We considered if we should do the same, and if we should purchase a Zoom account to be able to host it.

Action: Guy to investigate the possibility of an online lecture series

9 **RSC Biophysical Chemistry Group Activities** (Mark Wallace/John Sanderson)

Discussed under Chair's Report.

10 **Royal Society of Biology Activities** (Tharin Blumenschein)

1) *Newsletters continue to be circulated to the committee.* I have now started circulating the Policy and Covid-19 newsletters as well. If anyone would rather not be included in these emails, please let me know.

2) *Royal Society of Biology Diversity and Inclusion group* – I could not attend the last meeting as it clashed with induction activities

Action: Jayne volunteered to take over BBS representation in the RSB
DIWG

11 **Secretary's Report** (Tharin Blumenschein)

Nothing to report. Tharin is dealing with routine incoming emails, and otherwise just surviving the teaching term.

12 **Meetings Secretary's Report** (Guy Grant)

2021

24th-28th July, EBSA Congress, Vienna

Online meeting – we should have an online meeting in 2021.

Action: all to think about topics and consider volunteering

Syma has been running online meeting every 6 weeks, stemming from the satellite meeting to the Biennial meeting that she organised. These meetings have sponsorship from the Microbiology Society.

Action: Syma to organise a BBS-badged edition of these meetings around Easter

December, Glasgow – the allostery meeting originally thought of for December 2020 could take place then.

Action: Guy

2022

BBS Biennial Meeting, Ireland – EBSA could support it then, perhaps IUPAB as well. The Ireland Tourism Board might support it – they would prefer a more international meeting. We could invite Paul Engel (UCD Conway) to help.

Action: Guy and Peter to work on a proposal, with John Sanderson's help

13 **Newsgroup/Publicity Officer** (Syma Khalid/John Sanderson)

The newsgroup needs to pass on to another committee member. Volunteers are sought.

Action: John Sanderson to transfer newsgroup duties to another committee member

Action: John Sanderson to have a more active role in meeting organisation

Action: Olwyn to ask via email for a volunteer to take over the newsgroup.

Action: All to send any news for Twitter to Syma

14 **Website** (Mark Wallace)

Going well, the Biennial Meeting report has just been added.

15 **Membership** (Ehmke Pohl)

Had to leave the meeting before this agenda item. We need to be mindful of "bursary tourism" if we start accepting international members.

Action: Mark Wallace to amend rules for bursaries on the website

16 **Irish Sub-section** (Peter Crowley)

Had to leave the meeting before this agenda item. For 2021, we should include Irish speakers in our lecture series, given that the Irish lecture tour cannot go ahead.

17 Honorary members

Three honorary members have been approved this year: Stephen Harding (Nottingham), Simon Philips (Leeds) and Alison Rodger (Macquarie). We need to start thinking of nominations for next year.

Action: all to think of nominees

18 AOB

We haven't been engaging with graduate students recently. Perhaps we could support student societies. This was an old action point for Olwyn, but it became more difficult with everything that happened due to the Covid pandemic. As Guy will become Education Officer, perhaps there could be some synergy with other societies in engaging with students. John Seddon is happy to engage with the RSC on the topic, via the Faraday Division, while Tohy is happy to contact the IoP.

Action: Tharin to add item to agenda for next meeting

19 Date of Next Meeting

The next committee meeting will be in February 2021, online. The date will be decided after a Doodle poll.
